

Appl. No. 09/944,217
Amendment dated September 17, 2003
Reply to Office Action of June 19, 2003

Remarks

Claims 1-3, 5-12 and 14-31 are pending in the application, with claims 1 and 15 being the independent claims. Claims 4 and 13 were previously canceled. Claims 4-6, 13, 16, 17 and 23-28 are withdrawn from consideration.

Based on the present Amendment and the following Remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Objection to the Drawings:

Reference number “20a” has been added to Fig. 1 to overcome the objection to the drawings.

Objection to the Specification:

The abstract has been amended to correct minor editorial problems to overcome the objection to the Specification.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 11, 18-22 and 29-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

Referring to the rejection of claim 11, claim 11 recites “said second paths slope downwardly from said at least one severing plane...”. As shown in the exemplary embodiment of the drawings, the axis of rollers 13, 14 or 9, 11 slope away from severing plane P-P. It is respectfully submitted that this language is definite.

Referring to the rejection of claim 18, claim 18 recites “said advancing means includes a pair of rolls each engaging a different one of the strips...”. As shown in Fig. 1, roll 9 engages strip 3 and roll 11 engages strip 4, i.e., each of the rolls engages a different strip. It is respectfully submitted that this language is definite. Concerning the comment about claim 15, claim 15 does not prohibit the

advancing means from engaging the strips, and as such, the recitation of the advancing means advancing the strips is not indefinite.

Referring to the rejection of claim 19, claim 19 and claims depending from claim 19 have been amended to distinguish between the first and second pairs of rolls. Concerning claim 19 relationship with claim 18, as shown in Fig. 1, rolls 8 and 9 are above the strips (one side) and rolls 13 and 14 are below the strips (the other side).

Referring to the rejection of claim 22, "beneath the respective portion of said path" is best shown, for example, in Fig. 1 showing rolls 9, 11 underneath the path of the web.

Referring to the rejection of claim 29, claim 29 has been amended to overcome the rejection.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3, 7-12, 14-15, 18-22, and 29-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,627,319 to Mattei et al. ("Mattei").

The device and method of Mattei are based on the assumption that it is only necessary to measure the width of only one of the strips (column 4, lines 18-20) to ensure that the web is divided evenly. This is only true if the width of the undivided web is always the same, which is typically technically impossible. As is the case with any other variable, the width of the undivided paper web is subject to random fluctuations. According to Mattei, the width of the one strip for which the width is measured is kept constant if a web width deviates while the deviation is shifted fully to the second partial strip. In this process, the percentage deviation is doubled since the partial strip has only half the width.

Accordingly, the idea behind the present invention is to measure the width of all of the strips and to compare these values. As a result, a deviation of the partial strip widths is detected and compensated, thereby ensuring that both strips have an equal width.

Claims 1 and 15 have been amended to specify that the width of each of the strips is measured. As such, claims 1 and 15 distinguish over Mattei and are allowable over Mattei. Claims 2, 3, 7-12 and 14 depend from claim 1. Claims 18-22 and 29-31 depend from claim 15. As such,

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claims 2, 3, 7-12, 14, 18-22 and 29-31 are allowable as depending from an allowable claim.

All of the stated grounds of objections and rejections have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicant believes that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is hereby invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

A Notice of Allowance with claims 1-3, 7-12, 14-15, 18-22 and 29-31 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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